

# Exhibit 4

# **University of Minnesota – Twin Cities**

## **Student Services Fee Request Handbook For Media Groups**

### **2022-2023 Academic Year Requests**

This handbook was amended during Spring 2022 to reflect updates to the process of petitioning to become a Media Group.

The Student Services Fee process for the University of Minnesota – Twin Cities Campus underwent a comprehensive review during 2020-2021. This document contains information based on the approved recommendations from this review. Historical documents can be found at [www.studentservicesfees.umn.edu](http://www.studentservicesfees.umn.edu).

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### Student Services Fee (SSF) Application Timeline

***Dates and times subject to change. Detailed information will be shared with applicants.***

#### Media Group Requests for the 2021-2022 Academic Year (FY 22)

**Deadlines are 9:00 a.m.(CST) unless otherwise noted**

#### **December 2021**

TBA Kickoff Meeting & Information Session

#### **January 2022**

Tuesday 18th Deadline for groups to accept invitation to apply as a Media Group

#### **February 2022**

Tuesday 1st Application materials due - groups must complete all application requirements and upload all required documents to their SSF Google Folders by this deadline, and may not edit after the deadline unless explicitly instructed to do so by the SSFC or SSF Advisor

Wednesday 2nd-  
Friday 4th Presentations

Monday 8th-  
Friday 11th Deliberations

Late February TBD Recommendations published on website

Late February TBD Appeals due (appeals will be due 5 business days following publication of recommendations)

#### **March 2022**

TBD Appeals hearings

### How to Get Assistance with SSF Requests

***(click on the links to access)***

Sign up for [advising appointments](#);

If no appointments are available, or if available appointments don't work with your schedule, email the SSF Advisor with your availability to request a meeting

Utilize information provided during the Kickoff Meeting

**UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA BOARD OF REGENTS POLICY**  
***Student Services Fee***

**SECTION I. SCOPE**

This policy governs assessment of the University of Minnesota (University) student services fee, which funds non-instructional programs and activities; supplements the academic curriculum; and is an integral part of the University's educational experience.

**SECTION II. DEFINITIONS**

**Subd. 1. Student Services Fee.** *Student services fee* shall mean the mandatory annual fee assessed to designated students to provide funding for student programs, activities, and services on each campus.

**Subd. 2. Student Services Fee Committee.** *Student Services Fee Committee* shall mean the committee established on each campus to review and recommend annually the student services fee.

**Subd. 3. Designated Students.** *Designated students* shall mean all students registered for:

- (a) six or more credits per semester; or
- (b) three or more credits per summer session.

Credits for off-campus distance classes are excluded from the total credit count.

**SECTION III. GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

The following principles shall guide the assessment of the student services fee:

- (a) Fee-supported programs, activities, and services shall be available to all students assessed the fee;
- (b) All persons involved in the development of the student services fee shall recognize the relationship of the student services fee to the total tuition and other costs of education for students;
- (c) The University's educational mission is well served when students have the means to engage in dynamic discussions of diverse topics in their extracurricular campus life;
- (d) Decisions regarding the allocation of fees among student groups shall be made in a viewpoint-neutral manner.

**SECTION IV. ASSESSMENT AND USE OF THE STUDENT SERVICES FEE**

**Subd. 1. Assessed Students.** The student services fee shall be assessed on all designated students.

**Subd. 2. Fee Exemptions.** The following students shall be exempt from assessment of the student services fee:

- (1) non-degree seeking students;
- (2) post-secondary education option students and concurrent high school
- (3) those students not designated, as defined in Section II; and
- (4) others as approved by the president or delegate.

**Subd. 3. Special Assessments.** Special assessments to the student services fee may be authorized by the fees committee for clearly defined classes of students.

**Subd. 4. Optional Fees.** Registered students exempt from paying the student services fee have the option of paying the full fee or paying optional fees if offered by individual fee-receiving units.

**Subd. 5. Prohibited Uses.** The student services fee may not be used to fund courses or activities for which academic credit is offered within a department where credit is the primary focus of the course or activity.

**Subd. 6. Capital Improvements.** A request for funding of a capital improvement shall be approved by the fees committee on each campus. Such improvements shall not be subject to revision except in the most severe circumstances.

#### **SECTION V. STUDENT SERVICES FEE COMMITTEE**

The student services fee committee established on each campus shall adhere to the following.

**Subd. 1. Representation.** The student services fee committee shall have at least a student majority, and all members of the committee shall have the right to vote. The student, faculty, and administrative staff members shall be appointed under committee procedures in effect on each campus.

**Subd. 2. Validation of Fee Payment.** Student members of the student services fee committee shall demonstrate payment of the student services fee each semester throughout their terms. Summer session payment is not required.

**Subd. 3. Administrative Assistance.** Each student services fee committee shall receive administrative assistance from the respective campus administrations and student associations.

#### **SECTION VI. DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY**

**Subd. 1. Recommendations.** The president shall recommend for Board of Regents action student services fees for each campus in the *Annual Operating Budget*.

Adopted: July 9, 1982  
Amended: June 12, 1987  
February 12, 1999  
June 10, 2005

**TWIN CITIES CAMPUS STUDENT SERVICES FEES COMMITTEE ROLES, PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES****THE INSTITUTIONAL ROLE OF THE STUDENT SERVICES FEES COMMITTEE**

The Board of Regents requires that a representative process be established on each campus to recommend the level of the student service fee and the specific allocations to requesting organizations. (Note: Throughout this document “Fee Committee” shall refer to all committees described below, unless otherwise specified.)

**The process that has been established on the Twin Cities Campus includes the following:****Administrative Units:**

- The administrative units, media groups and special assessments committee will be composed of the Student Affairs Chief Financial Manager (or their designee) and at least 7 students.
- This committee will hear presentations by students and staff representing administrative units and provide feedback and recommendations to the Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students (VPSA/DoS).
- Based on feedback from the committee, the VPSA/DoS will make decisions on administrative requests and forward funding recommendations to the President for inclusion in the University’s proposed annual operating budget.

**Student Groups & Project Groups:**

- The Student Groups SSFC will be composed of 1 chair, up to 4 subcommittee (SC) chairs, at least 3 general members per SC, and 1 appeals chair who will hear presentations and serve on the appeals committee, and up to 3 faculty/staff members. For example, if three SCs are utilized, there would be 1 Chair, 2-3 SC Chairs, at least 9 general members, and up to 3 faculty/staff members.
- The chair and subcommittee chairs will hear and deliberate on project group requests.
- This group will work in sub-committees to determine funding recommendations for student groups and will forward these recommendations to the Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students (VPSA/DoS)
- After review, the VPSA/DoS will either approve or amend the recommendations before forwarding them to the President for inclusion in the University’s proposed annual operating budget.

**Media Groups:**

- The administrative units, media groups and special assessments committee will be composed of at least 7 students and the Student Affairs Chief Financial Manager (or their designee). In the case of media groups, one University of Minnesota – Twin Cities faculty or staff member (preferably from the Journalism School) will also participate in providing feedback and recommendations to the VPSA/DoS.
- This committee will hear presentations by media groups and provide monetary recommendations to the VPSA/DoS
- Based on feedback from the committee, the VPSA/DoS will make decisions on media group requests and forward funding recommendations to the President for inclusion in the University’s proposed annual operating budget

**Special Assessments:**

- The administrative units, media groups and special assessments committee will be composed of at least 7 students and the Student Affairs Chief Financial Manager (or their designee).
- This committee will hear presentations by special assessment groups and provide monetary recommendations and feedback to the VPSA/DoS
- Based on feedback from the committee, the VPSA/DoS will either approve or amend the requests before forwarding them to the President for inclusion in the University’s proposed annual operating budget

**All requests:**

- The Board of Regents approves final monetary recommendations as part of the University’s annual operating budget.

Given this charge, the Fee Committees have the flexibility to:

- Develop procedures for organizations to present requests to the committee
- Develop timelines
- Establish operating procedures (within the Regents guidelines)
- Propose specific monetary and non-monetary resolutions
- Maximize accountability of funds received from the student service fee

Methods for dealing with conflicts/challenges:

- Challenges/conflicts should be directed first to the respective fee committee, and then to the SSFC Advisor for resolution. The Assistant to the VPSA/DoS may assist with resolution prior to forwarding concerns to the VPSA if need be.
- Procedures for dealing with unforeseen circumstances should be incorporated into the operating procedures that are reviewed and approved on an annual basis by the Fee Committees and the Office for Student Affairs.

#### **EXPECTATIONS OF STUDENT SERVICES FEE COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

##### **All Members:**

- Members must agree to the time commitment of their committee of appointment, and should be cognizant of this time commitment when applying to serve on the SSFC.
- Members must maintain good academic standing throughout their term(s) of appointment
- Members must demonstrate payment of the Student Services Fee during each semester of appointment
- Members must be appointed, attend all training sessions for the committee of their appointment, and complete training prior to the beginning of each fee cycle
- Members must identify, on their application and in subsequent processes, their membership in and whether they serve as an officer or in a leadership role of a unit or group requesting or receiving SSF funds, or if they are employed by a SSF-requesting group or unit. Members and employees must recuse themselves from deliberation on these units or groups and must make every effort to communicate potential conflicts of interest to the relevant SSFC Leadership, and the SSF Advisor. SSFC members may not participate in presentations to the SSFC.
- Members who participate in the preparation of a fee request will communicate the level and scope of participation to the SSF Advisor. The Advisor will provide the information to the committee prior to presentations. This information will be received without prejudice.
- Members must develop a thorough understanding of the budget request process, application materials, and SSF handbook information relevant to their committee of appointment
- Members must attend all budget request presentations relevant to their committee of appointment
- Members must attend all deliberations relevant to their committee of appointment, unless the member is a non-deliberating (appeals committee) member

It should be noted that SSFC members are required to attend all committee activities, including training sessions, meetings, and assigned presentations and deliberations (with the exception of non-deliberating members). Members will only be excused from committee activities due to legitimate absences as defined by University policy - Makeup Work for Legitimate Absences, Section 1. Committee member absences, even for academic reasons, can severely impact the ability of the SSFC to function efficiently; all SSFC members must be transparent about absence requests and communicate their scheduling needs to the SSF Advisor during the application period. Failure to do so may result in termination.

The SSF Advisor may request documentation of illness or other conflicts. Repeated absences will not be tolerated and may result in an adjustment in stipend and/or removal from the SSFC.

#### **REMOVAL OF STUDENT SERVICES FEE COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

A member may be expelled from the Committee by a two-thirds vote or at the discretion of the Advisor. Charges against the member may not be made public.

#### **THE ROLE OF THE STUDENT SERVICES FEE ADVISOR**

The Board of Regents requires that administrative assistance be provided to the fee committee. An advisor is provided for the fee committee. The advisor is charged with the following:

- Coordinating and executing the selection of the fee committees
- Communicating with student groups and units about the fee process, timeline, and application requirements
- Assisting student groups in the preparation of their fee requests through providing educational resources and direct advising



- Training the fee committees
- Providing support and advice to the committees during the fee decision-making processes
- Ensuring that all fee-receiving groups complete accountability procedures

It should be noted that the advisor is not involved in the decisions of the fee committees and does not participate in the deliberation and allocation process. The advisor, however, is the primary resource for determining answers to procedural questions or ambiguities.

### **FFC COMMITTEE RESOLUTIONS**

Although the committees may make resolutions at any time, they are generally made after the committee approves their final recommendations. These resolutions are made in an effort by the committee to pass on the thoughts of one year's committee to future committees; although resolutions are not officially binding, they are intended to alert future committees to the concerns, commitments, and rationales of past committees.

Resolutions and recommendations are the ways in which the committee communicates to the University community. If you would like access to these files, please contact the Student Services Fee Advisor.

1. At the end of each annual Fee cycle, the chair of each committee will prepare a written memorandum to the SSF Advisor regarding any resolutions approved by the committee, as well as specific suggestions, advice, or dissenting opinions for the next year's SSFC to consider while evaluating requests.
2. The SSF Advisor will provide the language and rationale for the approved resolutions to the VPSA/DoS or their designee, who will review them for consistency with University policy, impact on the overall SSF process, and impact on the University student community.
3. The VPSA/DoS, committee chairs, and the SSF Advisor will meet to discuss perspectives regarding the resolutions. The VPSA/DoS will communicate approval of any resolutions to the SSFC Advisor.
4. The SSF Advisor will determine how to incorporate the intent of the approved resolutions in the SSFC handbook and guidelines.
5. All resolutions (approved and not approved) will be archived by the SSF Advisor for future reference.

### **REVIEWING THE SSF PROCESS**

SSFC Resolutions will be reviewed and considered on an annual basis. Given a charge provided by the Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students, issues that arise within the SSF process may be reviewed at any time.

### **REVIEWING THE SSF ADMINISTRATION BUDGET**

The SSF Administration Budget will be shared with and approved annually by the Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students. Debating and voting on the SSF Administrative Budget is outside the scope of the Student Services Fee Committee. The SSF Administration Budget covers the cost of administering the Student Services Fee process, and thus is best determined by the Vice President for Student Affairs in consultation with the Assistant to the VPSA and the Student Affairs Chief Financial Manager (or their designee).

### **GENERAL OPERATING PROCEDURES**

#### **Parliamentary Procedure**

Using Robert's Rules of Order creates a framework for conducting SSFC business. As such, Robert's Rules provides for constructive and democratic meetings, to help, not hinder, the business of the Committee. Under no circumstances should "undue strictness" be allowed to intimidate members or limit full participation.

1. All business conducted by the Student Services Fees Committee, to include procedures not specifically expressed in this document, will be guided by Robert's Rules of Order. These rules may be set aside or amended by the Committee at any time and for any length of time by a two-thirds vote.
2. A quorum will consist of a majority of the members appointed. Of the quorum, the majority must consist of students versus other representatives. This rule may be amended at the beginning of a meeting by a majority vote, but only after quorum has been initially established and the Committee is aware of members who must

depart before business can be concluded. The amended rule will automatically be nullified once the Committee has adjourned for that business day.

3. The Chair cannot assign a member to act as Chair on a future date. In the event of the Chair's absence, the SSFC advisor will appoint a temporary Chair.

#### **Voting**

1. Votes by proxy are not allowed.
2. Absentee ballots are not allowed.
3. Any elections will be done by secret ballot.
4. Any official action requires majority approval of those casting a yes or no vote.
5. Fee committee members shall not vote on the allocation of a group of which they are elected, appointed, or employed.

#### **Quorum**

A quorum is declared as over 50 percent of the filled seats of the voting members on a committee or sub-committee

#### **Rules of Conduct**

The Committee reserves the right, by two-thirds vote, to set the rules of conduct for its members.

#### **Committee Records**

All committee business is open to the public. Written recommendations and minority statements, along with resolutions adopted by the committee will be shared publicly.

#### **MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR APPLYING FOR STUDENT SERVICES FEE FUNDING**

**In order for a group to be eligible to apply for funds, all of the following criteria must be met:**

1. The applicant must be an Administrative Unit, Registered Student Organization (RSO), or Campus Life Program (CLP) that is currently registered and in good standing with Student Unions & Activities. RSOs, CLPs, and Media Groups must remain registered and in good standing throughout the duration of their approved funding in order to receive allocated funds.
2. Groups that receive pass-through funding from special assessment groups (the Council of Graduate Students, Professional Student Government, or the Minnesota Student Association) may not request funds through the SSF process.
3. Groups must be able to prove that they are actively managing their finances.
  - a) Upon request by the SSF Advisor (or their designee), the SSFC, or other University officials, groups must be able to provide financial documentation (in the form of bank statements – or EFS report for CLPs - that can be supported by a general ledger) for the 12 (consecutive) months prior to applying
  - b) It is recommended that RSOs operate from their own bank account, separate from a parent group/organization, and that CLPs operate from an EFS chart string unique to their organization. If an account is shared, groups should highlight their own expenses on bank statements or EFS reports that are submitted as part of their application materials.
4. RSOs must be in compliance with Student Activities Financial Policies for RSOs
5. During the academic year in which groups apply for Student Services Fee funding, one current budget preparer from each applicant group must complete the financial management workshop on the Student Services Fee Canvas Course.
6. Groups must operate as non-profit organizations

7. Partisan political organizations are not eligible for student services fee funding. "Partisan political organizations" are organizations affiliated with a registered political party or candidates for election which are formed for the purpose of supporting a political party or candidate for election. Such groups may seek funding for their nonpartisan political activities (e.g., candidate forums available to all qualified candidates, nonpartisan educational events, etc.) through other University grant and student group funding programs.
8. Groups receiving student services fee funding must have students participating in deciding how fee money is spent. Students must be involved in the development of policies and budgets for any proposal that comes before the Student Services Fee Committee. Students must present budget requests to the SSFC. Non-students may not participate in presentations.
9. Groups receiving Student Services Fee funds must demonstrate expenditures in general compliance with their submitted budgets.
10. All budgets and all financial records for groups currently receiving Student Services Fee funding must be made available upon request for inspection
11. Groups must be in compliance with accountability procedures in order to request funds. This includes the accurate completion of spending reports, return of unused SSF funds to the University, and fulfillment of requests from University offices and officials. Groups must keep ledgers updated and upload receipts within two weeks of respective transactions.
12. Membership of the organization and access to events and services must comply with the University of Minnesota's Equal Opportunity Statement.

**If a group meets all the above criteria and applies for funds, the application must meet all the following criteria:**

- 1) Applicants must apply for a minimum of \$1,500 in event-related costs *per request*, and/or a minimum of \$1,000 *per annual request* for operations. Below this threshold, applicants are encouraged to find alternate sources of income such as grants, fundraisers, etc. [Student Unions & Activities](#) can provide information regarding [available grant opportunities](#).
- 2) Groups must provide documentation or information requested by the SSFC, SSFC Advisor (or their designee), within 5 business days of the request.
- 3) All groups applying for student services fee funds must fully and accurately complete the standardized request form(s) required for their request(s). Copies of standardized forms will not be accepted by the SSFC.
- 4) It is recommended that RSOs operate from their own bank account, separate from a parent group/organization, and that CLPs operate from an EFS chart string unique to their organization. If an account is shared, groups should highlight their own expenses on bank statements or EFS reports that are submitted as part of their application materials.
- 5) All groups applying for student services fee funds must fully outline advertising plans in requests for events and projects in the space provided on the standardized form, even if no funds are being requested for advertising. Advertising plans must clearly describe how groups will promote events and projects to the campus community.
- 6) All groups applying for student services fee funds must present their request(s) to the Student Services Fee Committee as required.
- 7) All groups applying for student fee funds must comply with all deadlines established by the Student Services Fee Committee. Requests for exceptions must be submitted to the SSF Advisor by email and received at least **five days** prior to the deadline for submission. Exceptions require approval of the Student Services Fee Advisor and a majority vote of the SSFC Chair and Subcommittee Chairs.

- 8) All SSF applicants must submit original application documents unique to the organization presenting them. All documents must be composed of work original to the organization presenting them, and must not be plagiarized, copied or duplicated from the application of another fee-receiving group or any other entity without proper citation or permission.

#### **STUDENT SERVICES FEE COMMITTEE GUIDELINES FOR DECISION MAKING**

The Student Services Fee Committee is charged with making responsible, viewpoint-neutral recommendations for awarding fee funding to administrative units, student groups, and media groups. The committees must evaluate requests according to the viewpoint-neutral criteria listed below. While each committee has the authority to weigh and apply the criteria, each committee must consistently apply all criteria to each group applying for student services fee funds. The committees may not consider the viewpoint of requesting groups in making funding decisions.

All funding recommendations from the Student Services Fee Committee must be accompanied by references to the applicants' fulfillment of the Guidelines for Decision-Making. The SSF Committees will endeavor to include all guidelines that affect the level of funding of an applicant in the recommendations, which are also influenced by the total amount of funds available to the SSFC and the overall quality of the application.

- 1) Describe how the request contributes to one or more of the following:
  - Provides a service to the student body.
  - Supplements the academic curriculum.
  - Helps foster a sense of community on the Twin Cities campus.
- 2) Events and services proposed in the application must be consistent with the mission of the organization.
- 3) Groups must articulate how event attendance, space and equipment utilization is estimated in their request and provide data to support these estimates upon request.
- 4) Groups must articulate how the items or events they are requesting will reach the largest number of students consistent with the need.
- 5) Groups must articulate how item(s) requested to support their operation are critical to the mission and success of the group **and** how the item(s) will support their day-to-day operation
- 6) Groups must articulate the need for items requested. This includes:
  - Items requested are not available for students to access on campus
  - How the items requested are critical to the operation of the group or the success of an event
- 7) Events, projects, resources, and services requested from the SSFC must be open to all fee-paying students regardless of academic classification (undergraduate, graduate, or professional student) or course of study.
- 8) Groups must articulate their efforts to secure funding in addition to their request for SSF funds.
- 9) Groups must demonstrate financial need that cannot be fulfilled with alternative sources of Income. The SSFC may reduce an allocation for any group if it finds reserve balances in excess of justified needs.
- 10) Groups must follow all instructions and follow deadlines outlined in the SSF Handbook and provided by the SSFC, the SSF Advisor or their designee, or other University officials.
- 11) Groups must fully justify their SSF request, including:

- Providing all information and documentation required by the handbook and application materials, as well as information and documentation requested by the SSFC, the SSF Advisor or their designee must be provided as instructed.
  - Cost comparisons for equipment and other items totaling over \$100 in value as requested on the application materials and by the SSFC
  - Thoroughly responding to all aspects of questions and prompts included on the application as well as questions posed by the SSFC
- 12) Groups must be current in their financial management responsibilities, including:
- Accountability procedures outlined by the Office for Student Affairs
  - Completion of spending reports and the return of unused SSF funds
- 13) Groups must demonstrate their ability to manage the amount of funds requested from the SSFC
- 14) Groups must provide written justification of significant deviation from the proposed budget outlined in prior student services fee requests
- 15) Previous access to Student Services Fee funding does not guarantee future funding, in full or in part, from the SSFC.
- 16) Applicants must recognize that the SSFC may not be able to provide funding for all justified requests if group requests exceed the amount of funds available for allocation. In these cases, funds will be allocated for items that the committee(s) determine best meet the criteria outlined in the GDMs.

**VIEWPOINT NEUTRALITY (adapted from the [Center for Campus Free Speech, Guide to Student Activity Fees](#))**

In the context of collecting and allocating student fees, “viewpoint neutrality” means ensuring that there is no bias toward any particular viewpoint. Because student fee funded activities involve a wide range of projects and programs that can require vastly different levels of funding, “neutrality” is not measured by the particular **outcome** of funding allocations, but by the **process** by which those decisions are made. The goal is to have a process that is neutral and bias-free, not to create an artificial ‘balance’ of views and activities.

It is easier to describe the elements an allocation system may *not* have in order to prevent bias rather than to design a bias-free system. The key elements are:

- Funding decisions may not have any relationship to the particular viewpoint of the group or activity. Requests for funding based on criteria that are neutral toward the views of the organization.
- Funding may not be contingent on a particular level of support or popularity of an organization, although the amount of funds to be allocated to an organization may take into account student involvement in the organization.
- Criteria used to evaluate funding proposals must be consistently applied.

### **MEDIA GROUPS**

In order to gain approval to apply as a Media Group, a group must meet the following minimum criteria:

1. Have a mission that indicates that the group's primary focus is to provide a media-related service (not exclusive to social media) *to the University of Minnesota - Twin Cities campus community*
2. Be a University Unit, Registered Student Organization (RSO), or Campus Life Program (CLP) currently registered and in good standing with Student Unions and Activities
3. Meet all minimum requirements for applying for Student Services Fee Funding (see pages 10-11)
4. Gain approval from the VPSA/DoS (or designee) to apply for SSF funds as a Media Group.

Media Groups must maintain the minimum criteria to request SSF funds throughout the duration of their funding recommendations in order to receive allocated funds.

#### **Petitioning to become a Media Group:**

If a group meets the above criteria and has not previously received SSF Media Group funding, they may follow the process outlined below in order to be recognized as a Media Group in the SSF request process.

If a student group would like to petition to be recognized as a Media Group in the SSF process for the first time, the group must:

1. Have applied for and received SSF operations funds through the student groups SSF Process (with a primary mission/focus of providing a media-related service) for the past three consecutive academic years **and:**
  - Meet the minimum criteria outlined above
  - Provide documentation (from the SSF advisor) that the group has completed and submitted all required documents, spending reports, and payments to the University (if applicable) on-time and in an accurate manner for the past three consecutive academic years
  - Justify a budget request that exceeds the parameters of the operations guidelines for student groups
2. If groups meet **all** of the criteria above, they may petition to become a media group by completing **all** of the following tasks:
  - Meet with the SSF advisor to discuss the Media Group SSF application process. The group must approach the SSF advisor prior to September 1 in order to petition to become a Media Group the following academic year.
  - Work with the SSF advisor to develop a timeline to complete a presentation to petition to become a Media Group. The timeline must be complete by September 30, and the presentation must take place by October 15.
  - Complete a presentation to the VPSA (or their designee), the Student Affairs Chief Financial Manager (or their designee), the Student Affairs Senior Finance Manager (or their designee), the SSF advisor, the leadership team of the Student Groups SSFC, and the Chair of the Media Groups SSFC. In this presentation, the group must:
    - o Provide documentation that proves they have completed and submitted all required documents, spending reports, and payments to the University (if applicable) on-time and in an accurate manner for the past three consecutive academic years
    - o Provide justification that their operational budget exceeds the parameters of the operations guidelines for student groups
    - o Provide an outline of their proposed budget for the upcoming academic year, including the amount of their request.
3. The Student Affairs Senior Finance Manager (or their designee), the leadership team of the Student Groups SSFC (minus the appeals chair), and the Chair of the Media Groups

SSFC will deliberate on the group's petition and provide a recommendation to the VPSA (or designee) within one week of the group's presentation. The SSF advisor will be present for this meeting in order to answer questions or provide clarifying information but will not vote on the group's status.

4. The Senior Assistant to the VPSA, in consultation with the Senior Associate Vice President for Student Affairs, will review the committee's recommendation and provide a decision to the group within 10 business days.
5. If the group disagrees with the recommendation, they may appeal to the VPSA, who will consult with the Student Groups SSFC appeals chair, the SSF advisor, and the Student Affairs Chief Financial Manager and issue a final decision.

#### **Administrative Units, Media Groups, and Special Assessments Student Services Fee Committee (SSFC)**

##### **Membership**

Committee members who are active participants in any fee-requesting media group may not be a part of presentations made to the SSFC, deliberate on organizations for which they have conflict of interest, or in other ways communicate information regarding their respective organizations to the SSFC. In addition, committee members may not communicate to their respective organizations regarding SSFC business outside their role as a member of the SSFC.

##### **Appointment**

The administrative units, media groups, and special assessments SSFC will be hired by the SSFC Advisor and at least two University staff members who are not employed by SSF-receiving units.

#### **ALLOWABLE EXPENSES FOR MEDIA GROUP REQUESTS (OPERATIONS & EVENTS)**

[Groups may find detailed information on allowable and unallowable expenses here](#)

When requesting \$100 or more for a single line item, groups must provide documentation that supports the amount of their request. This documentation is not necessary for line items totaling under \$100.

All event and operational funds requested for the 2022-2023 academic year must support operations and events that take place between August 29, 2022 and August 27, 2023.

##### **Note on Budget Adjustments due to COVID-19 & Safety Concerns:**

Media groups may make requests based on the information provided in this handbook and on the budget request forms provided by the SSF Advisor. Groups must follow current guidance from the State of Minnesota and the University when making purchases with SSF funds, traveling, and hosting events (regardless of the location of the venue). Restrictions and adjustments to allocations will be communicated to groups by the SSF Advisor. If groups have questions around restrictions related to the COVID-19 pandemic, representatives should contact the SSF Advisor.

Groups found responsible for not complying with guidelines and requirements may lose student group benefits and/or be subject to a change in student group status. This may include the loss of privilege to request SSF funds.

##### **Modifications to events:**

Media groups may request to make modifications to their proposed events by contacting the SSF advisor and submitting a proposal and updated budget to the Student Groups SSFC. These requests must follow the guidelines for events outlined in the Student Groups SSF Handbook.

**Media Group Request Process****Required Meetings**

Prior to each funding cycle, at least one officer from each Media Group must attend an Informational Meeting with the SSF Advisor, as well as complete the Financial Management Workshop module of the SSF Canvas Course. The SSF Advisor will schedule the Media Groups Informational Meeting and communicate the information with Media Group Officers provided by the organization.

**Budget Request Process**

The request process for Media Groups will take place annually. Groups must submit requests on forms provided by the SSFC Advisor and the Student Affairs Chief Financial Manager (or designee). Media Groups will request funds for event-related and operational costs on one request (per group).

Media Groups may request up to \$30,000 per academic year for event-related purposes. Media groups may request funds for up to 8 events per semester. If groups choose to request funds for events, they should use the Media Group Request Form provided by the SSF Advisor to create and justify these requests.

Requests for over \$30,000 for event-related expenses, or over 8 events per semester will not be considered by the SSFC.

Once Media Group representatives attend the mandatory information session and meet all criteria to apply for funds, the SSF Advisor will provide Media Groups with a standardized budget request form.

Groups may create other budget request documents in addition to the standardized forms at their discretion, however, these must be easily readable by the committee.

**Budget Request Documents**

A complete SSF request for Media Groups includes the following:

- 1) Two years of financial records, including general ledger information (January 2020-January 2022)
- 2) Media Group SSF Budget Request (provided by SSF Advisor)
  - a. General Information
  - b. Projected SSF Carryforward Summary
  - c. Media Group Information & Budget Summary
  - d. Evidence of Product (media output – for example: hours on air; number of publications; number of print/online articles; number of podcasts; number of advertisements; number of videos; number of page views; etc.) – September 2020-August 2021. See the Media Group Application Checklist (provided by the SSF Advisor) for additional information.
  - e. Total Budget Breakdown
  - f. Operations Breakdown
  - g. Compensation Breakdown
  - h. Events as applicable

All groups applying for SSF funds must comply with all deadlines established by the Student Services Fee Committee. Requests for exceptions must be submitted in writing and received at least five days prior to the deadline for submission. Exceptions require approval of the Student Services Fee Advisor and a majority vote of the administrative units, media groups, and special assessments SSFC.



All SSF applicants must submit original application documents unique to the organization presenting them. All documents must be composed of work original to the organization presenting them, and must not be plagiarized, copied or duplicated from the application of another fee-receiving group or any other entity without proper citation or permission.

Requests that are submitted late, are incomplete/have missing information, or do not meet all application criteria outlined on pages 10-11 of this handbook will not be accepted by the SSFC.

### **Supplemental Information**

Groups may provide supplemental information to the SSFC by placing documents into the "Supplemental Information" folder located in the group's SSF Google Folder (provided by the SSF Advisor/designee). If not requested by the SSFC after the request deadline, this information must be shared by the budget request deadline.

The SSFC, SSFC Advisor, or their designee may request supplemental information or documentation from Media Group applicants. This information must be submitted by the group (via the SSF Google Folder) within 5 business days of the request.

### **Presentations to the SSFC**

All Media Group presentations to the SSFC will be open to all SSF-paying students.

The SSF Advisor and/or designee will coordinate the scheduling of Media Group presentations. Media Groups will have a maximum of 60 minutes for presentations to the SSFC, including time for questions and answers. It is advised that Media Groups allow for at least 20 minutes for SSFC questions. Time allotted for presentations is dependent upon complexity of requests and size of the applicant's overall budget.

All media groups applying for SSF funds must present their request(s) to the SSFC as required. Groups that do not attend their presentation as scheduled will not be eligible to receive funds.

### **Deliberations**

All deliberations of the administrative units, media groups, and special assessments SSFC will be open to all SSF-paying students. Groups are encouraged to attend deliberations. The SSF Advisor (or designee) will communicate logistical information about deliberations to media group applicants.

Groups attending their own deliberations may be given an opportunity to respond to misinformation or misunderstanding on the part of the SSFC during deliberation on their requests. During this time groups may provide clarifying information (not new information) to the SSFC, as well as answer questions from the SSFC should they arise. Time limits for providing clarifying information will be at the discretion of the SSFC Chair.

The SSFC will make recommendations based on the information provided by groups on applications, during presentations, and during deliberations. The SSFC may reduce the amount of a recommendation based on issues including, but not limited to the following:

1. Incomplete forms
2. Mathematical errors
3. Inaccurate or inconsistent information
4. Lack of documentation or justification
5. Failure of a group to provide information to the committee within 5 business days of a request
6. Groups arriving late for presentation times

7. Failure of a group to follow instructions given by the SSFC or the SSF Advisor
8. Significant deviation between prior SSF allocations and actual spending of those funds

#### **Public Feedback**

At any time, members of the University Community can provide feedback to the SSFC Advisor.

#### **Appeals**

Appeals for Media Groups will take place after recommendations are published by the administrative units, media groups, and special assessments SSFC.

In order to appeal a funding recommendation by the SSFC, individual SSF-paying students and media groups must provide evidence that one (or more) of the following criteria were met:

1. The SSFC violated its own rules
2. The SSFC exhibited bias against an organization
3. The SSFC did not make a decision in a viewpoint-neutral manner

Individual SSF-paying students (individuals) who wish to appeal the recommendations of the SSFC must follow this process:

1. Individuals will have 5 business days following publication of recommendations to appeal a recommendation of the SSFC.
2. Individuals must complete the standardized appeal form (Individual Appeal Form on the SSF website), and must provide evidence that their case meets one or more of the criteria for appeal. The Individual Appeal Form will be made available when each set of recommendations is published, and will remain open for 5 business days.
3. Individuals must submit the Individual Appeal Form based on the instructions included on the SSF Website.

Media Groups that wish to appeal the recommendations of the SSFC must follow this process:

1. Media Groups will have at least 5 business days following publication of recommendations to appeal a recommendation of the SSFC
2. Groups must complete the standardized appeal form (Media Group Appeal Form on the SSF website), and must provide evidence that their case meets one or more of the criteria for appeal
3. Groups must submit the form according to the instructions provided by the SSFC Chair in their correspondence regarding the group's recommendation

When the Appeals Committee (AC) convenes, they will take the following action with individual and student group appeals:

1. The AC will review the forms submitted by individuals and student groups and determine whether sufficient evidence was provided that one (or more) of the appeal criteria were met.
  - a. If the AC determines that criteria were not met (sufficient evidence was not provided), the appealing individual or group will not receive a formal hearing.
    - i. The SSFC Advisor will share this information with the VPSA/DoS (or their designee) for final review. If the VPSA/DoS (or their designee) believes there is sufficient evidence for appeal, they will request that the AC hear the appeal and a formal hearing will be scheduled.
  - b. If the AC determines that criteria were met (the group provided sufficient evidence), the SSF Advisor will work with the group to schedule a formal hearing.
2. Formal appeals hearings will include:

- a. In the case of individual appeals, the student who submitted the appeal will be invited to participate. In the case of student group appeals, 1 student representative(s) from the appealing group will be invited to speak on behalf of the group – the student group may appoint their own representative(s).
  - b. The SSFC Chair
  - c. The Appeals Committee
  - d. Formal appeals hearings are open to all SSF-paying students to attend
3. Process for appeals hearings:
- a. Appeals Committee reviews all submitted documents prior to the hearing
  - b. Appealing individual or group representative has 5 minutes to discuss their case – no new information may be presented. New information is defined as information that the SSFC did not have access to during their initial deliberation.
  - c. SSFC Chair has 5 minutes to discuss their case/rationale
  - d. Appeals Committee may ask questions of the appealing individual/group and/or SSFC Chair
  - e. Appeals Committee will deliberate and make recommendations to the VPSA/DoS
  - f. All Appeals Committee recommendations will be reviewed by the VPSA/DoS and delivered to individuals/groups by the Appeals Committee Chair or the SSF Advisor
  - g. If a group is late for their appeal hearing, the Chair of the committee will advise the group on how much time they are allowed (if any) to discuss their case. Groups that do not attend their hearing as scheduled will forfeit their appeal.

The Media Groups SSFC Appeals Committee will include:

1. Up to four (4) SSFC members who did not participate in the group's original deliberation. These students may be from the Student Groups SSFC
2. Office for Student Affairs Chief Financial Manager or their designee (votes in the case of a tie)
3. The SSFC Chair/SC Chair (or designee) of whose committee heard the presentation of the appealing organization (non-voting)

#### **Accountability Procedures**

Media Groups will be held accountable for the use of SSF funds.

Accountability procedures for groups that receive SSF funds will include:

1. Groups must complete the steps to obtain funds allocated by the SSFC in a timely manner (within 2 weeks of notification of the availability of funds)
2. Groups must meet with the SSF Advisor (or designee) when requested
3. Groups must spend SSF funds in the way they were allocated by the SSFC
4. All fee-receiving groups must adhere to accounting procedures approved by the Student Services Fees Advisor and the Office for Student Affairs.
5. Groups must maintain the general ledger provided by the SSF Advisor (or designee). Groups must maintain the ledger provided and may not make copies of the ledger.
6. Groups must provide itemized receipts that support their general ledger
7. Groups must provide bank statements upon request from the SSFC, SSF Advisor, or other University officials
8. Groups that receive SSF funds for operational costs must provide documents such as leases and utility bills to support their general ledger and budget request (as applicable)
9. Groups must submit requests that reflect their current financial standing
10. Groups must submit documentation of attendance at events when requested by the SSFC
11. Groups must submit documentation of efforts to acquire income outside the SSF process (i.e., fundraising, collection of member dues, receipt of sponsorships, partnerships with external organizations, grant-writing efforts, etc.) when requested by the SSFC, the SSF Advisor, or other University officials
12. Groups must complete and submit spending reports by the deadline(s) issued by the SSF Advisor or their designee
13. Groups must return unused SSF funds to the University by the deadline(s) established by the SSF Advisor (or designee) in order to request funds

14. All student groups, special assessment groups, and media groups must indicate “SSF Funded” on all marketing for all events and activities funded either partially or fully by SSF funds.

Groups requesting SSF funds must keep their contact information current with the SSF Advisor (or designee) by providing the names and contact information of at least two students who are responsible for completing SSF requests and managing funds on behalf of the group. . If there is turnover in who is managing the group’s SSF request(s) or financial information , the group must immediately provide contact information of the new students to the SSFC Advisor. Groups may provide and update their contact information by [completing this form](#).

The SSFC Advisor (or their designee) may schedule meetings with student groups. All officers must:

1. Respond to messages/invitations regarding scheduling of meetings from the SSF Advisor (or designee) within 5 business days
2. Bring all requested/required documentation to any meeting. If requested/required documentation is not provided, the meeting may be rescheduled.
3. Provide any requested financial documentation to the SSF Advisor (or designee) or the SSFC within 5 business days of the request

### **Other Financial Requirements**

#### **All-Funds Budgeting**

The practice of reporting all sources of income and expenses (i.e. an “all-funds budget”) is required for all Student Services Fee requests and is consistent with how other budgets are reviewed at the University of Minnesota. Expectations will be defined and budget worksheets provided for what information should be provided by applicants.

#### **Statement on Media Group Reserve Funds**

While the SSFC will consider all assets of a media group when making decisions regarding funding recommendations, there is no cap for reserve funds of media groups.

Media groups may maintain reserve funds that have not come from Student Services Fee awards. These funds must be accurately reflected on all request documents, and groups must provide financial documentation consistent with what they report for reserve funds.

Media groups may request to hold SSF funds in reserve or the SSFC may direct media groups to hold funds allocated to them through the student services fees process in reserve for certain purposes. Examples of the most common types of reserves are listed below. It should be recognized that media groups differ considerably in terms of size of operating budget, space, plant and equipment needs, revenue volatility, etc.; therefore, there is not a standard rule that can be applied to all groups. Balances and reserves should be described in the budget submission and reviewed during the unit presentation.

Examples of potential fee reserves:

1. Operational Reserves – to mitigate operational risks (i.e. fluctuations in enrollment, revenue volatility)
2. Equipment Reserves – to cover replacement cost of standard equipment. Methods to determine appropriate equipment reserve amounts should be outlined in budget submission.
3. Facility Reserves – to cover repair and replacement costs of facilities which may include furniture, furnishings and equipment (FFE) and minor space remodeling projects. Methods to determine an appropriate facility reserve amount should be outlined in budget submission.
4. Long Range Reserves – designated for one-time special needs, large-scale projects such as major renovation or building projects and related expenses (e.g. moving, planning and design).

At any time, the SSFC may require media groups to meet their own budget needs through utilization of their reserve funds.

The SSFC, with the assistance of the SSF Advisor, will closely monitor the amount of SSF funds spent by media groups. Groups may be required to return SSF funds that have not been spent or otherwise allocated for summer programs/operations, reserves, or upcoming budget requests. Budget preparers/responsible parties will be accountable for this task.

Funds returned to the University may be used for future SSF expenditures.

**Statement on Changes to the Student Services Fee**

If at any time the University decides not to collect part or all of the Student Services Fee or to refund to students part or all of the Student Services Fee, student groups may be required to return all unspent SSF funds effective as early as the date they are notified to cease spending.